

Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel claims 16-18 without prejudice. Please amend the remaining claims and add new claims 35-37 as shown below in the List of Claims.

List of Claims

1-10. Cancelled.

11. (Currently amended) A process for producing an L-amino acid comprising:

- a) culturing an enterobacterium of the genus *Escherichia* in a medium for a time and under conditions suitable for producing said L-amino acid; and
- b) ~~recovering or~~ isolating said L-amino acid;

wherein the *yjgF* open reading frame of said enterobacterium has the nucleotide sequence of ~~the coding sequence of~~ SEQ ID NO:1 and has undergone a modification by one or more methods of mutagenesis selected from the group consisting of: deletion of all or part of the *yjgF* open reading frame; insertional mutagenesis due to homologous recombination in the *yjgF* open reading frame; and transitional or transversional mutagenesis with incorporation of a non-sense mutation in the *yjgF* open reading frame, wherein said modification results in an increased production of L-threonine by said enterobacterium relative to the amount of amino acid produced in said enterobacterium prior to said mutagenesis; and

wherein said *yjgF* open reading frame encodes the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2.

12-13. Cancelled.

14. (Previously presented) The process of claim 11, wherein said L-amino-acid is selected from the group consisting of: L-asparagine; L-serine; L-glutamate; L-glycine; L-alanine; L-cysteine; L-valine; L-methionine; L-isoleucine; L-leucine; L-tyrosine; L-phenylalanine; L-histidine; L-lysine; L-tryptophan; and L-arginine.

15. (Previously presented) The process of claim 11, wherein said L-amino acid is L-threonine.
- 16-18. Cancelled.
19. (Previously presented) The process of claim 11, wherein said enterobacterium is of the species *Escherichia coli*.
20. (Previously presented) The process of claim 11, wherein the expression of the *yjgF* open reading frame has been eliminated by the deletion of part of the *yjgF* open reading frame.
21. Cancelled.
22. (Previously presented) The process of claim 11, wherein said L-amino acid is recovered from said enterobacterium.
23. (Previously presented) The process of claim 11, wherein said L-amino acid is recovered from said medium.
24. Cancelled.
25. (Previously presented) The process of claim 11, wherein culturing is performed using a batch process.
26. (Previously presented) The process of claim 11, wherein culturing is performed using a fed batch process.
27. (Previously presented) The process of claim 11, wherein culturing is performed using a repeated fed batch process.

28. (Currently amended) A process for ~~the~~ producing an L-amino acid, comprising:
- a) culturing an enterobacterium of the genus *Escherichia* in a medium for a time and under conditions suitable for producing said L-amino acid; and
 - b) either recovering said L-amino acid and determining the amount of said L-amino acid recovered or isolating said L-amino acid;
- wherein the expression of the *yjgF* open reading frame of said enterobacterium has been eliminated by deletion of all of the *yjgF* open reading frame; and wherein said *yjgF* open reading frame encodes the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2.
29. (Previously presented) The process of claim 28, wherein said *yjgF* open reading frame has the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.
30. (Previously presented) The process of claim 28, wherein said L-amino acid is selected from the group consisting of: L-asparagine; L-serine; L-glutamate; L-glycine; L-alanine; L-cysteine; L-valine; L-methionine; L-isoleucine; L-leucine; L-tyrosine; L-phenylalanine; L-histidine; L-lysine; L-tryptophan; and L-arginine.
31. (Previously presented) The process of claim 28, wherein said L-amino acid is L-threonine.
32. (Previously presented) The process of claim 28, wherein:
- a) said *yjgF* open reading frame has the sequence of SEQ ID NO:1;
 - b) said L-amino acid is L-threonine; and
 - c) said enterobacterium is of the species *E. coli*.
33. (Previously presented) The process of claim 11, wherein said L-amino acid is L-homoserine.
34. (Previously presented) The process of claim 28, wherein said L-amino acid is L-homoserine.

35. (New) A process for producing an L-amino acid comprising:

- a) fermenting an enterobacterium of the genus *Escherichia* in a medium for a time and under conditions suitable for producing said L-amino acid; and
- b) recovering said L-amino acid and determining the amount recovered;

wherein the *yjgF* open reading frame of said enterobacterium has the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 and has undergone a modification by one or more methods of mutagenesis selected from the group consisting of: deletion of all or part of the *yjgF* open reading frame; insertional mutagenesis due to homologous recombination in the *yjgF* open reading frame; and transitional or transversional mutagenesis with incorporation of a non-sense mutation in the *yjgF* open reading frame, wherein said modification results in an increased production of L-threonine by said enterobacterium relative to the amount of amino acid produced in said enterobacterium prior to said mutagenesis; and

wherein said *yjgF* open reading frame encodes the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2.

36. (New) The process of claim 35, wherein constituents of the fermentation broth and/or the biomass in its entirety or portions thereof remain with the recovered L-amino acid of step b).

37. (New) The process of claim 36, wherein said L-amino acid is L-threonine.